violent agitation against the orders was inaugurated in Great Britain itself. Almost at that very moment, however, Napoleon drove the reigning house of Portugal to Brazil, and thus opened the most important ports of South America to British importations. The glut of the English storehouses was thus momentarily relieved; and, while the merchants suffered serious loss from the low prices they received, they were saved from absolute bankruptcy. For two years longer the struggle on both sides was continued with desperation; and would probably have resulted in the despair of Great Britain, had not the improved methods of agriculture, introduced along with the improved methods in manufacturing, made it possible to feed for some time longer the still comparatively small population by means of home production.

This was the interval which brought matters to a crisis on the Continent. Great Britain could get on very well without the silks and other luxuries produced in France, substituting for them woolens and cottons; but English cruisers made almost impossible the importation into Europe, not only of colonial necessities, but also of the raw materials necessary for indispensable manufactures. By the system of licenses alone was it possible to maintain the French army; cloth and leather wherewith to outfit Napoleon's soldiers were brought from England into the Hanseatic ports in open contempt of the Continental System. Since Great Britain also held the monopoly of coffee, tea, and sugar, without which the not more than half-hearted Germans of the Rhine Confederation would not live, and which Napoleon did not dare to cut off entirely from even the French and Italians, it was thought that the only possible reprisals against her not already instituted would be in the line of further restrictions on her manufactures. During